

**Statement of Rep. Edward J. Markey introducing the Stockpile Stewardship Resolution****March 24, 1999**

Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution to express the Sense of Congress regarding the direction of the U.S. program to maintain the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile in the post-Cold War era.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which President Clinton signed in 1996, bans all nuclear explosions in order to promote nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation "by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons." The treaty requires us to maintain the safety and reliability of our nuclear weapons without explosive tests. It does not require us to spend \$60 million for new submarine warhead designs. It does not require us to spend \$198 million on underground "subcritical" nuclear tests and preparing for banned explosive tests at the Nevada Test Site. It does not require us to spend \$466 million on fusion explosion experiments that could lead to hydrogen bombs that don't need uranium or plutonium, which would be a nonproliferation nightmare. And it certainly does not require us to spend \$5.5 million for a new National Atomic Museum, colocated with the Anderson-Abruzzo International Balloon Museum.

These and other projects are an expensive jobs program for nuclear scientists, in the guise of keeping unneeded weapons design, testing, and manufacturing capability. They are inconsistent with our commitment to nuclear disarmament in the Nonproliferation Treaty and with the purposes of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Faced with our massive investment in nuclear weapons research, other nations are slowing arms reductions and keeping their own nuclear weapons development programs, thus putting our real security at risk.

The safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile can be maintained with a more modest program of surveillance of the warheads and occasional remanufacturing when necessary. The resolution I am introducing today expresses support for such a custodianship program that protects our national security without wasting money or providing cover for new nuclear weapons programs that will prolong the Cold War and undermine the unsteady international nuclear non-proliferation regime. The resolution expresses the Sense of Congress that the nuclear weapons stockpile can be maintained with a program that is far smaller, less expensive, and does not require facilities or experiments that are likely to be used for warhead design or development. The resolution thus urges the Secretary of Energy to redirect the program for custodianship of the nuclear weapons arsenal toward less costly and less provocative methods that are consistent with United States treaty obligations.

I hope this resolution will serve as a useful vehicle for educating the Congress and the public about the nature of the current stockpile stewardship program and for promoting consideration of less costly and less destabilizing alternatives. I urge my colleagues to join in cosponsoring this resolution, and moving towards a more sound nuclear policy.